



PUPPETRY JOURNAL



VOLUME X — NO. 4

JANUARY - FEBRUARY - 1959

THE PUPPETEERS OF AMERICA

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Producing a Professional Puppet Play

by Raymond Mount, Jr.

My wife and I do hand-puppet shows for elementary schools. I take the play on the road all alone, as a oneman show, but Betty has the essential job of directing the new show, blocking out all the action, getting the timing right, and pulling me through frequent periods of discouragement. We had productions of Jack the Giant Killer, Sinbad the Sailor, and Reynard the Fox in our repertoire. It was time to get up a new show.

The play had to appeal to elementary school children, sixth graders, kindergartners, and all ages in between. We try to chose a story which can be told mainly in action, with as little talk as possible. Since it is to be a one-man show, we have to get a play that doesn't require more than two puppets on stage at a time. Rapunzel seemed like an excellent choice.

Do you know how the tale goes? The witch has an enchanted garden. An expectant mother persuades her husband to pick some rampion, a vegetable, from the garden. The witch catches the husband red-handed and makes him promise to give up their child after it is born. The witch keeps Rapunzel prisoner in her tower, and the only way she can get into the tower is by climbing Rapunzel's hair. A young prince climbs up to see Rapunzel, but the witch finds out about his visit and cuts off Rapunzel's hair. The prince comes back to see his beloved, but the witch frightens him and throws him down into some brambles. He is blinded. Finally Rapunzel, who has been wandering lost in the forest, finds the prince. His sight is restored.

We thought the story offered a

conflict that could be shown visually, by movement. Also, it called for a number of props which could be handled to advantage by hand-puppets, so we started in.

We didn't start by building puppets; we used old puppets from our other shows as stand-ins. We began on the props. It seems to me that the way a hand-puppet manipulates the props can make or break a guignol play.

First I put up a cardboard mock-up of a tower, and pinned a makeshift length of silk hair on a female puppet. I usually take the front curtain off the puppet booth for rehearsals, so that I can look in a mirror. I work the puppets over my head. The mirror told me that the puppet could swing her hair out over the tower, and that another puppet could climb up it and down it successfully. So far so good. The hairclimbing action, the central motif of the story, could be effective. Rapunzel was produceable.

Another encouraging thing which our mock-up tower and the mirror told us was that when two puppets were crowded into the tower together, they looked "cute". I mean more than cute. Already, I was visualizing two sizeable puppets in medieval costume, in a tower much too small for them, like the pictures in medieval manuscripts. If possible during a show, I like to get two puppets together in a limited space—at a window, or in a boat, or in some other way removed from the main stage. I think they look appealing that way.

The next thing was to get a prop for the baby. A roll of cloth would do, and I found that the witch could

take the baby away from the mother on stage. I didn't want it violent, however, so I thought I would have the witch cast a spell over the mother. I brought the mother on stage singing a lullaby. The witch appeared and made a conjuring motion. The mother broke off the lullaby abruptly; and then, like a sleep-walker, the witch's power over plants. I gave up the baby of her own accord.

So far the story was telling itself in action pretty well, and we didn't write down any words at all.

When I talk about using quick mock-ups for props, and stand-in puppets for characters, I am thinking about the first trials we made of the story to see whether or not it could be done. Yet in spite of trying to save time everywhere, it took us months and months to get Rapunzel finished. I think we are the slowest producers in the puppet world. But, surely, dramaturgy for children deserves as much time and care as writing for the grown-up theatre.

Next we thought about the enchanted rampion. We would show the witch, by magic, making the plant rise out of the earth right there on the stage, before the audience's eyes. I went to an artificial flower shop and brought several artificial plants.

When the witch grew the rampion, it looked effective in the mirror. We decided to make a big thing out of the witch's power over plants. I had her grow a big tall weed which I intended to call wolf's bane. The witch would make this huge weed rise up. The weed would then sink, and the witch would be angry with it and grow rampion instead. This was one of the few things which we added to the original story. We wanted it a faithful production of the authentic story of Rapunzel. But as every puppeteer knows, you have to change things here and there. You have to have action. I had an idea that I could bring back these enchant-

ed plants at the end of our play.

The next prop we had to make was the pair of scissors for the witch to use when she cut off Rapunzel's golden locks. With my props, in a one-man show, it is the handling of them off stage which is more difficult than the holding of them in the puppets' hands. Each prop, like the scissors, for instance, is hung on a nail so that the puppet can grab it and get up with it on stage on cue. The timing of all our action is what takes the longest, hardest work.

Next we had to deal with the part of the story where the prince is blinded. We didn't want this part to be gruesome, so we took one more little liberty with the brothers Grimm. We tried various blindfolds, without success, and at last Betty had a solution. The witch would put a magic black hood over the prince's head. The prince would be blind until he should meet one person kind enough to help a stranger. Then the charm would be broken.

This business worked well in action. The witch put the hood over the young man's head. He blundered about on the stage, sightless. Then Rapunzel, wandering in the forest, came to the same thicket where the prince was. The two of them were on stage, but neither could recognize the other. Then Rapunzel took the hood from the prince's head, and he could see again.

Also, during the blind scene I thought I could use the enchanted plants again. I have a belief that if you get one good idea for a show, you should use it not once, but two or three times. Then the audience knows that the playwright really meant to put his device into the show, instead of letting a good thing creep in by accident. So I had the witch send more enchanted trees to clutch the prince in their arms and tear at his clothes. I wanted the trees to look weird, almost alive. I was

thinking of the pictures of trees in children's books by Arthur Rackham. So we found an old twisted dead tree root in the woods. I have this grotesque object rise up and weave around, as if it were alive, during the scene when the prince is blundering his way through the forest. We use a lighting effect here in the finished show. The lights black out when the prince is blinded, and the Arthur Rackham tree comes up in a special weird light. I control this light with a dimmer, using one free hand.

Then we managed to get the magic plants into the play one more time. We had worried for quite a while about how to end our play. What about the witch? Shouldn't she be punished in some way? Is this wistful, sombre story of Rapunzel to end without the witch suffering a bit, too? We finally got the idea we had been looking for. We had the plants grow up all around the tower, on all sides, and then move closer and closer. The witch cries to them to move back, but they will not obey her any more. Finally the witch herself cannot get out, and the magic trees pull the whole castle down. By slipping off the clamp holding the scenery with one hand, I am able to handle both the tower, the witch, and the big, broad leaves of the plant. I simply have the plant pull the castle down. That is the end of the show.

By now Betty and I had our play of Rapunzel told in action. We went ahead and made permanent new puppets and permanent props. But we saved the costuming and painting of the puppets till later. We felt that our real work was just beginning. The working out the purely visual effects of paint on puppet faces and color and cut in puppet clothes would have to come last. Before we could have the pleasure of doing the art work, we had to spend more time in blocking, timing, and directing the movement of our actors.

Betty is the director of the show. After I have worked with the mirror for a sufficient time, I put the front curtain back on the puppet booth so I can't see the mirror. Then Betty makes me go over the action again and again. Each puppet movement must be convincing. Only when we have the action right can we begin to put the speech in permanent form. The time came at last when we could allow ourselves to use words as well as action to make our meaning clear. It was time to stop ad-libbing the dialogue, and write it down.

After we had written the script, we weren't pleased with it. Dialogue for the Middle Ages, or for any historical period, presents a real challenge to the playwright. The characters should not speak in modern lingo. Present-day cant in the mouths of characters from another age may be clever for adult plays; but for traditional children's plays, the effect is grating. On the other hand, the characters sound silly if they speak with false archaisms. I do not say that the language in the King Arthur narratives, for example, does not possess grandeur and a romantic charm. But I question whether it is successful in the children's theatre. We cannot write in genuine Old English or Middle English. Pseudo-medieval speech, as in our nineteenth-century poems and novels, is not satisfactory on the stage. So how are these medieval characters to talk, anyhow? We solved the problem by doing what we had had in our thoughts for a long time. We cut our direct discourse, and did the play in narration, with the puppets pantomiming the action.

We added one more character, a storyteller. He is a mellow and benign old man, a medieval scholar with a white beard. He tells our story, and he is able to speak during the brief moments when the puppets

have left the stage empty.

We liked having the puppets move in pantomime, while the old man is telling the story. It made them seem a little more like figures in a medieval manuscript come to life.

After we had rehearsed for a long time, I began to feel that I could get the puppets up exactly on cue, and I could handle the props without dropping them. I had worked out my motions to be automatic. And of course, by this time, I knew all the storyteller's lines by heart. We were now ready for the delightful part of

puppetry. I mean, painting the faces and designing the costumes.

Here, the mirror again came into use, because we wanted everything to look right under the stage lights, and at a distance. Our painting is crude, not refined. We try to use strong contrasts of light and dark, so that the puppets can be seen in the last row of an auditorium seating as many as five hundred people.

Finally we were ready to give a trial show of Rapunzel before a real audience of children.

Puppets! Here I Come!

James Menke

Ever since I started in puppetry, I've read and heard about the puppets in Germany, so when the Army decided to send me to Germany, I made a resolution to see as many puppets as possible. Upon arriving at my station in Munich, I immediately began to look for puppets in any shape or form.

The first theatre I found was the permanent theatre run by Franz Schadt. This is a small theatre located close to the center of the city. It is perfect for puppets. The theatre seats 200 and each seat is reserved. Shows are given on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons and two shows on Sunday. Each performance is of a different play so in the period of a week, you could see four different plays.

The first show was "Hansel and Gretel", a show that we had toured in the States for two years, and I was anxious to see their version. A gong sounded and the lights dimmed. The curtain went up on a beautiful set. Everything was three dimensional no painted backdrops. The

lighting was very well done, the puppets beautifully carved, but -- the manipulation left much to be desired. The puppets either floated two inches above the floor or were dragged around the stage. There was no attempt to make the puppet walk. The show was so well done in the setting and lighting department that it was a shame the manipulation was not better.

After the show, I went backstage. I was amazed to find that it had taken five puppeteers and three stage hands to produce the show. The voices had been recorded. The puppeteers worked from two bridges about ten feet above the stage. The puppets were quite small, the adult characters were just about one foot high, but, because of the small size, it was difficult to see them even in the small theatre. There was no permanent stage floor. It was a series of tables on rollers so that by pushing the tables in and out of the proscenium opening you got a wonderful effect of the puppets walking or flying from one place to the other. This effect

has been used in every show that I have seen there. In "Hansel" it was used when the children got on the witch's broom and flew home.

Since the puppeteers spoke very little English and I spoke no German, it was difficult to carry on an extended conversation, but they did invite me back to watch a future show from the bridge.

I went back the following week and saw the first show, an original about a good ghost and the traditional Kasper, from the audience and the second, Little Red Riding Hood, from the bridge. Again the sets were wonderful, but the manipulation was bad. A lot of the trouble seems to be in the control, a weird thing, I've never seen the like of before, and the extremely long, about 12 foot, strings.

It was a disappointment to me that the only permanent theatre in Munich did not have more skillfull manipulation.

The second show I found quite by accident. I was walking the street one evening and passed a bookstore. The store was lighted and curtains were pulled across the windows. People were peeking through the gaps left by the curtain, so I took a peek too. I was surprised and excited to see marionettes. I quickly forgot where I was going and went in. I saw the last half of the first show and then the whole second show. It was the most amazing marionette show that I have ever seen. The puppeteer was Albrecht Roser of Stutgard, Germany. The show was performed on a raised platform lighted by four photo flood lights. The puppeteer was in full view at all times, in fact, sometimes the puppeteer's leg or foot was used as a prop, but the expert manipulation and beautiful puppets made it impossible to watch anything but the puppets. The show was full of humor, pathos and pure enchantment. Mr. Roser did most of the manipulation but, in a few numbers

he was assisted by a young lady who took care of the music.

The show opened with an extremely funny take off on choral societies. A group of frogs sang while one very acrobatic frog directed them. The record was of a trombone and gave a delightful impression of frogs singing. This was followed by so many wonderful numbers that it is difficult to single out any particular act. One which comes to mind was an organ grinder with a peg leg. All but one of the lights were turned out and the remaining one adjusted to give the impression of being a lamp post. The organ grinder entered, the sharp sound of the peg leg contrasting with the muffled shuffling of the other foot. He walked slowly to the lamp post turning the handle of the organ as he walked. Slowly he stopped playing and looking at the audience, lifted the hand that had hung limply by his side, mutly asking for a coin. His head turned as the invisible passerby ignored him and walked past. The hand slowly dropped back to his side and he began to play again. This time the organ started playing slightly out of tune as he slowly walked off stage.

Then there was the bull dog who had the audience holding it's sides laughing as he sang a romantic ballad. Even though I couldn't understand the German words, the expression on his face and the things he did had me laughing as hard as anyone there.

The show lasted about an hour and a half and kept an audience of adults, no children there, completely under a spell. Mr. Roser, without any elaborate stage or setting, with just puppets, many times without even music, took us on a trip to that wonderful world of enchantment that only puppets can create. I hope that someday he will be able to come to the States so American puppeteers can see this wonderful show.

Every year in September, Munich has a free for all called the October Fest. That's right, an October fest in September. This is a festival dedicated to the world famous Bavarian beer. For 15 days the city celebrates and goes wild. There are huge grounds where 50 beer halls and a huge carnival are set up. At this year's Oktoberfest, there were three puppet shows, one hand puppet and two marionette shows.

The hand puppet show was Punch in German. Here he is known as Kasper. The scenery was battered and the paint was chipping off so that the scene painted under the present one was peeking out, the puppets were battered and badly in need of paint, but the show was lively and kept moving at such a pace that I forgot the faults and even with the language barrier, thoroughly enjoyed Punch in German.

The two marionette shows were somewhat similar. Both presented the traditional acts, such as tight rope walkers, transformations and piano

players. The big difference was that one was done with portrait puppets of movie stars and ended with a 3D shadow show. We were given glasses with one red and one green lense in them and the shadows were projected with one red and one green light so that there were really two shadows. It worked on the principal of the 3D movies, and as the shadows threw things at the light, it looked like they were coming right into the audience.

The three shows were packing the crowds in. It seems that the German people really love puppets in any shape or form. I have just found out about a group of University students who do the classics and experimental shows with puppets. I'll have to get right out and track them down.

There aren't any commercial string puppets on sale in the stores, but there are many varieties of hand puppets and books of hand puppet plays.

I only hope that someday the American people will flock to see puppets as the Germans do now.

A Puppeteer's Creed

The following quotation from "Whatever Hope We Have" in *ESSENCE OF TRAGEDY* by Maxwell Anderson was sent to us by Lois Hurt.

Had it been written for puppeteers, it could not have been more appropriate.

"If you practice an art, be proud of it, and make it proud of you... turn to the art which has moved you most readily, take what part in it you can, as participant, spectator, secret practitioner or hanger-on

and waiter at the door. Make your living any way you can, but neglect no sacrifice at your chosen altar. It may break your heart, it may drive you half mad, it may betray you into unrealizable ambitions, or blind you to mercantile opportunities with its wandering fires. But it will fill your heart before it breaks it, it will make you a person in your own right; it will open the temple doors to you and enable you to walk with those who have come nearest among men to what men may sometimes be."

Festival! Western College--Aug. 3-9

International Festival

PART III

Marjorie Batchelder McPharlin

IVES JOLY OF FRANCE

The performance given by Yves Joly and his three helpers stands out because it was completely different from anything else seen at the Festival. The operators worked below the stage which had black velvet draperies at back and sides, with no scenery except an occasional set piece. There was no dialogue, but an excellent musical score was used, and the result was much like a dance drama.

The performance began with a dark draped figure with a paper head, who tore off sheets of paper from an easel, folded them, put a bit of drapery here and there and produced a dog, a woman, another man. Now a drama of jealousy is played: the men fight over the woman in a beautifully designed pantomime of conflict which ends in mutual destruction -- they simply tear each other's paper heads apart. In the next scene, a small fabric screen is set up. A flat figure made of yellow paper with moon-like horns, vaguely feminine, enters and stands. From behind the screen emerge other figures, also made of paper in different colors. They approach by turn, look at the yellow one, nudge it, but there is no response, except to one, a lover. Gradually the tension mounts, the tempo is faster, more figures circle about the yellow one. Finally, the villain in the form of a red figure comes, chases away the lover, snips off a piece of the yellow one's horn. She dies. All the others come and look, then remove her to one side and burn her.

Then followed a group of short scenes done with human hands, for which Joly is famous. One suggested a sea anemone luring its prey; another was a sort of Carnival. In

a third scene a man and a woman enter dressed in red (gloves on hands), disrobe and swim; they lie on the beach together, are arrested and taken away by disapproving policemen.

A complete drama was presented with umbrellas as the actors. Held by the tips, the umbrella handles suggested the characters, with a detail here and there to help. A young man makes love to a young girl and persuades her to go away with him. Two policemen are sent by the distraught parents (very proper and stiff characters) to find them and bring them home. Mother and Father display a very genuine grief, the former tearful the latter baffled and indignant. The policemen start off in a business like manner, but they never seem to catch up with the couple. Once, in a night club, the lovers are almost apprehended, but the policemen are diverted by the chorus girls -- lovely, frilly creatures portrayed by ruffled parasols which are opened and shut rapidly to suggest their movement. This chase goes on for a long time. The girl is not deserted and left desolate, indeed, her lover is faithful. They finally decide to return home. Hesitant, uncertain of their welcome, they enter the house. The parents are a bit cold, until the girl whisks out a baby from the folds of her cloak -- not really a cloak, of course, but the folds of the umbrella -- and all is forgiven. Father shakes hands, Mother weeps, and the policemen come puffing in, stolid and dogged but too late. The happy family rides off in a "voiture" covered with a fringed umbrella, drawn by an umbrella steed, and with twirling umbrellas for the wheels.

The action was not clear but re-

markably subtle, done with perfect timing and sophisticated finesse. At no time were the actors anything but umbrellas, but they suggested all these characters in the same way that a piece of sculpture can be at once a piece of stone and a portrayal of a person. The action was reduced to essentials and played on a stage uncluttered with unnecessary scenery, yet the performance was rich both for the eye and the ear.

THE TANDARICA THEATRE OF BUCHAREST

"The Five Fingered Hand" presented by this theatre was perhaps the most brilliant show of the Festival. It was extremely funny, but it succeeded at the same time in satirizing the murder mystery. The plot followed the usual trend of affairs found in such stories. Mr. X kills a bank clerk and escapes, leaving his sign of a black outspread hand imprinted on a paper which is fastened to the wall with a dagger. The clerk's fiancée enlists the help of a detective--none other than Sherlock Holmes himself, who is a delightfully satirized puppet version of that famous character. Accompanied by a dog, not a bloodhound, but a bouncy little high--voiced creature, they follow the trail of Mr. X. He leads them on a merry chase; there are several more murders, but we do not see them, only the five fingered hand. The pursuit leads through city streets full of traffic, which is suggested by many cut-outs of autos and trucks, fastened to rods and moved rapidly across the stage. There was a gay night club scene where the pursuers were for a time diverted from their grim job. On to the country they went and found a rope hung from a pole--would there be a corpse on the other end which was hidden behind a fence? Much suspense while they pulled and pulled and at last there appeared-----a cow. There was an

underground room with a skelton in a closet, a suit of armor with a hammer in its hand (used, of course, to conk someone over the head,) and a dancing figure. The pursuers are halted momentarily by a bridge which blows up just as they are about to cross it. They catch up with Mr. X in an airplane and shoot it out, but he escapes. Sherlock employs disguises; once, dressed as a woman, he nearly overtook Mr. X on a rapidly moving train. After many other exciting scenes, Mr. X is finally captured.

Especially notable in this play was the puppet-like quality of all its parts. The actors were hand-and-rod figures, almost abstract in their design. In a scene at a bar, one character had his head split open (literally) in a brawl, but it snapped back into place with no harm done. People landed in chandeliers, a dancer ended up with a table draped around her in a way only possible with puppets. Consistent with the style of the puppets, the scenery was simple and exaggerated, often just a suggestion. Flat cut-outs were much used, such as the auto in which the pursuers dash after Mr. X. The whole pattern of music and noise effects which was woven into the play also had a special puppet quality of unusual sounds. A very wide stage was used. One half of it could be curtained off while action took place on the other, so that no intervals between the scenes were necessary. Hence the action seemed exciting and breathless, yet it was never muddled, always as concise in design as the puppets and the scenery. There was no dialogue but the pantomime was perfectly clear.

In many puppet plays, one forgets that the actors are puppets because they give an illusion of life. In "The Five Fingered Hand" one was constantly aware that the actors were puppets, and it was because of this that they were able to show up the

ridiculous actions of human beings who are characters in a murder mystery. One came away from the show delighted by its freshness, its vitality, its movement and brilliance of color. Yet, primarily entertaining though it was, it contrived to point out how exaggerated, how artificial, how unrealistic is the murder mystery.

FILMS

One evening, May 19, was set aside for a gala showing of puppet films. With complete disregard for limitations of human endurance 14 films were scheduled. After the first 8 there was an intermission so I left since I was not jurying these. For the record, here is the list: German Democratic Republic, "An Incredible Story;" Chinese People's Republic, "The Wise Goat" in which he learns how to defy a tiger; England, "The Magic Strings", a marionette making film by Waldo and Muriel Lanchester; Czechoslovakia, "The Forgotten Soldier;" U.S.S.R., "A Divine Creature", another satire by Obraztsov's theatre; Belgium, "The Puppets of Toone", a documentary about one of the traditional Flemish theatres; Rumania, "Knickers are Worn Short", a satire on the business of atomic testing; France, "Noses in the Air" in which toys escape from a schoolroom and have many adventures; India, "Indian Puppet Theatre"; Hungarian People's Republic, "The Frozen King;" German Federal Republic, "A Small Theatre with a Big Heart;" Bulgarian People's Republic, "Cinders and Runner;" Italy, Podrecca's "Little Ones;" Poland, "Circus under the Stars;" Denmark, "The Lead Soldier."

PUPPET EXHIBIT

The International Puppet Exhibit was held in the School of Architecture Building. It was a handsomely designed display which made use of modern technics. There was great

variety in the size, shape and disposition of the screens and booths built for the various units of the exhibit. The color was lively, and the lettering was elegant and simple with cut-out letters glued to the background for a three dimensional effect. On each side of the stairs as you entered there were posters arranged on screens which projected out from the wall. Above the table with the registry book there was a figure of Vasilache representing the traditional Rumanian puppet theatre, and one of Tandara representing the new. Large photographs of ancient and medieval puppets, both Oriental and Western, set the historical note, which was further illustrated by a large map of the world with photos to show some of the typical theatres. Another map gave the location of the twenty state puppet theatres in Rumania and statistics on their attendance records. Next came more pictures and puppets from the traditional Rumanian puppet theatre. There were photos of people making puppets, with a big marionette with springs for legs as a focal point. Each Rumanian theatre was represented by puppets, photos, sketches -- rich displays showing the fine workmanship and imaginative design which is evident everywhere in Rumanian puppetry.

As one went on, the exhibits from different countries were seen; India, Greece, Bulgaria with some especially nice sketches for scenery, France (a group of Tahon's beautiful puppets and a few from Joly's theatre); Indonesia (pictures and shadow puppets); Finland, with gay marionettes holding little Finnish flags in their hands; Sweden (puppets used in occupational therapy); Czechoslovakia; Argentina (old figures of the Don Quixote type); Yugoslavia; Holland, and Vietnam. Hungary had a large exhibit of photos, and many puppets, some very imaginative. Turning now and circling back to the beginning, there were

exhibits from East and West Germany, Italy, Japan (with 2 Bunraku type and others from the modern theatre PUK); Mongolia, with 2 especially handsome figures. Poland had the biggest puppets, and its exhibit had much variety: life size photo-murals of masked figures from the Grotteska Theatre and a huge blow-up of a Szopka. There was a beautiful golden lion with a Princess riding on his back and a richly costumed old hand-puppet nearly two feet high. Russia had figures from various parts of the

country and a huge map with pins having gay little Petrushku heads to mark the 15 state theatres, which extend across the Union from Vladivostok in the East to the Western border.

Unfortunately, the American exhibit did not arrive in time, because it was not realized how many weeks it takes for parcels to go by boat--and there is no air freight service into Rumania. However, it did arrive in due course, and was given a special display in one of the Tandarica theatres.

Los Angeles Guild

by John U. Zweers

John Zweers gives a complete description of the organization and program of their guild in the hope that it will be of benefit to others who are considering the chartering of similar Guilds.

The Los Angeles area puppeteers had long felt the need of a closer contact among themselves. The Los Angeles metropolitan area, covering nearly 500 square miles, had many puppet devotees who had never met. Isolated by geographical distances from the main stream of P of A activities, Californians needed adequate means of contact. For various reasons few even found it possible to attend the festivals in the East, Midwest, and South. This mutual desire for fellowship and self-improvement formed a great potential of puppet energy, the release of which was triggered by a local event.

The Pasadena YMCA decided to have an open house and exhibit to observe the tenth anniversary of my program of teaching puppetry to the children and youth of Pasadena. The

senior high school group, chairmaned by Betty Eisler, successfully organized and conducted the entire event with the active participation of the elementary school children and co-operation from all parents. Bertha Walsworth and I recognized this as the opportunity for which we had been waiting. All local puppeteers who could be quickly located were contacted and invited to display their work in the public exhibit, and thus the Los Angeles County Guild of Puppetry came into being. Everett and Ruth Kramer, Jack and Elva Aiken, Helen Crail, Margaret Fickling, Barry Campbell were among those who helped.

The next few months found these original members contracting other puppeteers and inviting them to join. Our constitution was written and accepted, officers selected, and a monthly news bulletin run off on an unreliable duplicator.

With the imminent approach of the P of A's first western Festival at UCLA, the Guild became busier than ever. Mel Helstein and I realized

that the Guild meetings and Bulletin could keep local people informed. The Guild personnel also became a reservoir of talent — 36 Guild members were active, if unnoticed, participants in the organizational processes of the Festival.

Several classes of memberships meet the needs of those in the area whose interests in puppets range from friendly-casual to earning-a-living - professionally.

Regular adult members (over sixty today) are joined by auxiliary and junior members at meetings held either on the second Saturday or Sunday night each month. Dinner is always provided, either by a caterer, if the meeting is at the Pasadena Y (which still seems to be the focal point), or prepared by Guild members who lend their homes for the evening. The meal costs \$1.50, and we usually make a small profit on the non catered affairs. A short but formal business meeting is called which then adjourns for a program presented by a Guild member.

One of the keys to success is the business meeting. We follow primitive parliamentary procedure, with each member free to participate. Juniors and auxiliaries, who have no vote, also may be heard. Each proposed action is submitted at the meeting for approval and instruction. This democratic method makes a strong organization with happy members. The Guild has succeeded because of the loyal support given by all members.

Our Bulletin grew to be a publication of which to be proud, when Don and Norma Coleman became the publishers. Don does a highly artistic and professional job in the illustrating and mimeographing of it each month. The Guild's symbol, a harlequin, was created by John Leland and graces the distinctive membership cards and stationery designed by Albert Petravich. Alan Cook has

done a highly competent job of handling Guild finances. We are not only completely self-supporting, but also have a small surplus in the bank.

In a recent Journal, Veva Mann told of our Guild Workshop Series taught by members Harry Burnett, Blanding Sloan, and Mrs. Malcomb Wilkes. A second series is now in progress, centered on hand puppets.

We offer a supply service to Guild members; by organizational bulk purchase a considerable saving is passed along to them.

Each year we sponsor a youth day. An article by Stephen Morrison in a future issue will discuss this vital part of American puppetry.

We are very proud of our beautiful charter, lettered by P of A President Romain Proctor. It is framed and comes to each meeting with our Guild map, treasurer's book, official minutes, and historian's scrapbook.

The Guild constitution requires that an annual exhibit be held. We have had, since the initial one at the Pasadena YMCA, displays at the Pasadena Art Museum, UCLA, and Long Beach Municipal Auditorium. This latter one was ably managed by Pat Stickle. She rounded up a fine representative collection, seen by over 53,000 people as part of the annual Hobby Show.

And still the Guild continues to grow. More important, the renewal rate is very high, nearly 100%. A few members have moved away, and now a new class has been added, non-resident membership. Thus, people may receive the News Bulletin although they cannot vote or hold office.

Each month's entertainment program is different. We have professionals, semi-professionals, hobbyists, amateurs, beginners, children and youth. We have had film nights, pot pourri nights, and discussion nights. We have seen shows by string, hand,

(continued on page 28)



PUPPET PARADE

(see photo section)

VIVIAN MICHAEL

THE MOUNTS

Shown here are the Mount puppets from "Rapunzel and the Witch".

The costumes and set inspired by medieval illuminated manuscripts, show the people as important, and the architecture much too small for them.

You will enjoy Ray's description of how he and Betty built their professional show...complete in this issue.

B. GAY PUPPETS

Bea Geller, left, and Ann Cohen, right. Bea and Ann have been working together for two years.

Ann, a graduate of the New Theatre School, is well known in her area for the plays she has written for Hadasah and for the musical plays compiled for various organizations.

Bea, a commercial artist attended the National Academy of Design and teaches puppetry at the Bayonne Jewish Community Center. Ann is responsible for the making of the puppets.

We can't quote all the nice comments about their recent endeavors made by press and clients, but we assure you they were all highly complimentary. 1958 Festival goers will recall the excellent productions of "The Great Purim Scandal" given by Ann and Bea at Chapel Hill.

Ann and Bea write:

We performed THE TEN COMMANDMENTS before an audience of 2,000 mentally retarded persons of three faiths between the ages of 5 and 95. (We did two shows of 1,000 each). This was a holiday celebra-

tion at a New York State Institution. Our show was chosen because it was especially written for children. This was the first time that live entertainment was brought to these people. The experiment was a great success. The audience responded audibly to the tender scenes, such as the Baby Moses in the bulrushes. They also showed great compassion for the oppressed slaves.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS is also receiving a fine reception from young audiences of every faith in churches and temples throughout the Eastern States. It was shown in Laurelton, Long Island and is scheduled for Holyoke, Mass., and then to Teaneck, Jersey City, Paterson, and East Orange.

On Dec. 9th, we played THE THREE WISHES for a school audience of over 1,000 Porto Rican children. Our version of this tale is set in Old Spain. It uses Spanish words in the script, as well as a bullfight scene and real Spanish music—a paso doble and a flamenco dance.

This performance proved to be one of the most exciting days we've ever had in puppetry. The children related to the show with a nostalgic warmth. They stood up to applaud and shout "Ole!" during the bullfight. They roared with laughter when our heroine was cooking "arroz con pollo." They were vastly amused to learn that the black sheep's name was "Noche" — they knew that "noche" means "night."

We met some of the children at lunch after the show. They referred to us as "Senoras Puppet Show!"

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the Mounts

PUPPET PARADE



B Gay Puppets



L. A. Guild



Roberta





Mack

Hertgeff



Jim Menke



Jerry Hartnett



Gretchen Riggs

Jerry Hornet

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LOS ANGELES GUILD

Read in John Zweers article this issue, how Los Angeles Guild combines work and pleasure at their meetings. Shown here is Mrs. Malcomb Wilkes, left, expert costume designer explaining how to costume a marionette to Mrs. Marjorie Mitchel...one phase of the "work" program.

ROBERTA MACK

Busiest woman on the West Coast must be Roberta Mack. She is always involved in a dozen projects and always adding new ones to her list. From hospitals to commercials...it's all in a days work for Roberta.

Well known to Californians is Smoky the Bear, made for the Forestry and Conservation Department of the Government. Smoky has performed for several years at schools, parks and playgrounds for miles around and is a long time favorite of the children.

Rudolph, the Red Nosed Reindeer together with Frosty (not shown) were added this year. The Witch and Cat were completed recently for the San Francisco News.

It seems that Hospital shows are her first love...bringing laughter to children, especially those confined to hospital wards, is her greatest joy. This year Dr. Sniffleswiper cavorted about the wards of East Bay hospital as the star of a Christmas marionette show. Vying for honors with the good Dr. were a roller skating dog, a bull terrier with a ferocious bark, two rabbits who flittered around in an amusing folk dance, a tap dancing cat and a sly old fox. Five shows a day was the usual pace.

Roberta is now working on "The Magic Seashell" for the National Story League Convention in June at Ailomar. She ends her interesting letter with "See you at Western"! We hope she doesn't pack any "crying babies" in her suitcase on this trip.

JIM MENKE

Jim Menke, who writes "Puppets! Here I come!" in this issue is out to see all the puppets in Europe before he returns from his stint with Uncle Sam. Jim writes:

I have just returned from England...saw Jan Bussel's ballet version of "Bluebeard" — beautiful marionettes. Christine Glenville is making movies...one series has been sold to the U. S. She took time out to show me her night club act. Murray Clark is building a wonderful "Aladdin" and "Amahl and the Night Visitors."

Jim keeps busy in army theatricals too. He has played the Colonel in "Teahouse of the August Moon", the Captain in Mr. Roberts and is rehearsing the Warden's part for "The Valiant". In addition is finding time to rebuild his "Hansel and Gretel" and prepare a new version of "Sleeping Beauty" for his return to the States. Good luck Jim, we are always glad to hear from you.

JERRY HARTNETT

Jerry Hartnett should be known as the "silent one" — he sends the JOURNAL his photograph with out one word of description. However, judging from "grapevine" reports, Jerry is being far from silent...is actively engaged in puppet productions in and around Manhattan, and as usual doing a fine job of them.

GRETCHEN RIGGS

Craft Week in Fairhope, Alabama. A week that is hard to describe. It comes in the spring, when the dogwood, azaleas, redbuds, jasmine, jonquils and narcissus turn the countryside into fairyland. It brings all the artists and craftsmen of this small town, which is tucked along the bluffs of Mobile Bay's Eastern shore, trooping out from their winter solitude. They "tote" the results of their year's work to be displayed in shop windows and on the streets.

Natives and tourists alike wander up and down, admiring and buying from weaver, potter, rugmaker or artist as each demonstrates his skill.

Gretchen Rigg's puppet shows are the crowning event of each day's festivities. For three years, now, they have played daily to crowds of children and adults — crowds numbering never less than a hundred-often many more. Ten gifted youngsters ranging in age from eight to 13, make

puppets - write plays and manipulate the puppets. They now have a repertoire of thirteen plays.

So for the eight days of Craft Week, Fairhope goes enchantingly beserk with creativity. At its end, the blossoms drop off the bushes, the artist and craftsmen retire once more into the workshop and studio. The town settles back into a serenity and relaxation known only to the deep south.

New Books

PUPPETS AND PUPPETRY

Outstanding among recent publications is the revised edition of the Studio publication **PUPPETS AND THE PUPPET STAGE**, by Cyril Beaumont, under the title, **PUPPETS AND PUPPETRY**.

The original edition has been a collector's item for a number of years. The revised edition should be a welcome addition to every puppeteer's library.

Cyril Beaumont, the famous ballet historian, combines an artistic make up with a world wide authentic coverage of puppetry. There are sections on history and the development of puppetry as well as anatomy. It's 160 pages contain more than 400 illustrations, mostly photographs giving a most complete record of all types of puppetry scattered throughout all nations. It is an invaluable reference, and a joy to leaf through and read. It is most attractively bound and printed...one of the really worth while additions to puppet literature.

Our only disappointment was the fact that Beaumont was evidently unaware of "Who's Who" in American puppetry, and in this writer's opinion

did a very incomplete coverage.... mostly his sins were those of "omission" in this field.

See ad on last page.. **JOURNAL STORE**
EIGHT PLAYS FOR THE PUPPET THEATER

Another new book...worthy of more than mention is **EIGHT PLAYS FOR THE PUPPET THEATER** by George and Elizabeth Merten. We won't attempt to review it...please refer to full page ad by the publishers in this issue for complete description. Buy it also from the **PUPPET STORE**

See ad on last page.

PAUL McPHARLIN PUBLICATIONS

A number of publications, heretofore unavailable are now on sale through the **PUPPET STORE**. See the ad on last page for complete list.

Please be patient with orders sent to the **JOURNAL STORE**. Publishers are slow filling our orders...we run out of mimeo publications and others must be mimeographed...they don't come in as promised...other complications arise, but we are getting things under better control...with larger surplus supplies...so hope to give you better service.

Western Ho! Festival 1959!

It's Time to Plan

Ronald Herrick

Now that the tinsel and the Christmas trees are gone and the Christmas show packed in moth balls, a new year has started. It is my sincere wish that it may be a happy and prosperous one for puppeteers where ever they are found.

I trust also that it will be a great and eventful year for our organization, The Puppeteers of America. Those members who each year attend the Festival, and especially those who attended at Chapel Hill, are pretty much familiar with the advances being made in this country and have formed a comparative view between puppetry in this country and the world at large.

To those members who have not attended the more recent Festivals let me urge you to start making plans now to attend the coming Festival at Western College, Oxford, Ohio. It shows early signs of being the best Fest yet. Regardless of your status in puppetry, there is a fund of rich information awaiting you there, Aug-

ust 3 through August 9. Whether you are a novice or a master of the art, you will find fresh ideas, outlooks and techniques that will inspire you to higher levels of artistry.

The nicest thing about any Festival is the nice warm feeling of companionship and good fellowship which exists between all puppeteers. No one is ever lonely or at a loss for friendship at a P of A Festival. This one, with its beautiful campus, central dining halls, spacious lounges with exhibit and store adjoining, will give us the feeling of a real luxurious vacation.

If you have never investigated the actual cost of a Festival, please do so. It is one of the most inexpensive vacations you could imagine, yet richly rewarding for you. Come prepared to contribute of your experience.. there is always some one happy to exchange ideas, and your presence will contribute to the general success of the Festival.

Festival 1959 at Western College

George Merten

As previously announced the 1959 Festival will be held at Western College, Oxford, Ohio, August 3 through 9.

George Merten, Festival Chairman, advises that preparations are coming along according to schedule. Committees have been appointed..others will be, and the Festival situation is well in hand.

Advance details are as follows:

We will have exclusive use of the campus and all of its facilities. No other groups on campus. Dormitories and auditoriums are within EASY

walking distance.

A central dining hall, large and beautiful, where meals will be served ...white table cloths and all the appointments of home. Coffee breaks without charge. Snack bars conveniently located on and off campus for late gatherings.

Extra..swimming pool..no charge, life guards in attendance..tennis courts..supervised playground for the youngsters..nurse available through out the Fest..college Doctor, on call.

Registration fee will be same as

usual..\$10.00 for Fest..\$5.00 for Workshop. Board and room, no extras-no tipping, \$8.00 per day. Special rates for children under 12. Maid service.

All facilities of a well equipped campus will be at our disposal... nothing reserved. This may not mean too much to the casual Festival-goer but for those who have to plan and provide the equipment necessary for a smooth working Fest, it is an Utopian set-up.

The exhibit and the store will be housed in the recreation room, directly under the dining halls and luxurious Clausen Lounge, which means that you can browse at your leisure, and really take advantage of these two added features of the Fest.

A letter just in from Roberta Mack says, "I'm sure every puppet in the land is jumping for joy at the thought of returning to Oxford next summer." Well, we hope you are jumping for joy and that even though it is months away, you are planning to be there. More details in later JOURNALS.

STORE

The Festival Store has become a very important part of the P of A Festival. It serves as an outlet for those who have puppetry material to dispose of, and as a shopping center for those who wish to buy.

All material carried in the year

round JOURNAL Store is available. This is supplemented by publications, puppets, puppet parts, controls, props, in fact any puppet material that any member wishes to offer for sale. This may be offered by individuals or groups.

It is not too early to plan to make some special article for sale....or gather together those unwanted articles that clutter up your workshop...your discards may be just what another puppeteer needs. Used material often sells faster than new.

The Store charges a commission on all sales..this goes toward general Festival expense...but we feel that the P of A profits less than the membership....the seller profits financially from his sales, the buyer has an opportunity to buy needed or desired articles, and every one is happy about it.

We do ask that your articles relate to puppets in some fashion. We have found that other articles, however attractive, do not have sales appeal. Most sought after are practical articles or inexpensive "puppet novel-ties", that can be taken home as souvenirs. Publications all rank high in sales.

If you need any advice or information, write to the JOURNAL. But...start now...don't put it off! Let's make this Store the biggest ever!

Help! Help! Help!

New Year's resolution! A better JOURNAL! The kind of a JOURNAL that YOU want. We can't do it without your help! We appreciate the many, many letters we get from folks who write so many nice and appreciative things about the JOURNAL....BUT....we are sure that the GRIPES do not reach our ears. Let's be frank. We publish what you

write for us. We don't influence the writers. At times it gets too heavy in one direction...but there is no material in the files to balance the issue. We have no control over this!

Personally, we have a feeling that it gets top-heavy with "theory" at times...that we need more practical down to earth practical hints about how-to-do-it articles...more of the

down to earth practical hints about materials, processes, supplies, etc. that you have discovered in your own workshop. There are probably many other things that YOU would like to see when you pick up an issue. There are folks in the P of A who have the "know how" if they could only be persuaded to put it on paper. A single idea, hastily jotted down by some one who "can't write" may be worth more than pages of well written irrelevant material. The JOURNAL pages are open to EVERY MEMBER, new or old.

Will you do me a personal favor?

1. Take time to tell me about what you would like to see added to the JOURNAL. Tell me frankly what you DON'T like about it. We will seriously consider every suggestion.

2. After you have sent that letter ... take a breather and sit down and WRITE an article for the JOURNAL ... the kind you'd like to read. It's YOUR JOURNAL.

I have my fingers crossed! I'll be watching for the mailman... Viv.

On Screen and TV

TOM THUMB

With three of his feature length films winning "Oscars", "War of the Worlds", "When Worlds Collide" and "Destination Moon", George Pal is bidding for recognition again with the current Production of "Tom Thumb".

George Pal, head of Galaxy Pictures, was born in Cegled, Hungary, studied Architecture at the Budapest Academy of Arts... received his degree there and shortly after opened his own motion picture studio in Holland. Here he experimented with puppets on the screen... his "Puppetoons" became internationally famous... in 1939 was persuaded to come to Hollywood.

Seen by some as a friendly contender to Walt Disney, Pal is again experimenting with the highly imaginative type of picture which permits him to develop the techniques which reach a new degree of perfection in each picture he presents, and to open new fields for his creative talents.

The play is adapted from the story of the Brothers Grimm. Russ Tamblyn, who plays Tom is actually five

foot ten, but through special effects is reduced to five inches tall... being able to hide behind a bottle or climb into a donkey's ear, much to the delight of the children and amusement of adults. Meant to appeal to all ages, "Tom Thumb" has a sly humor which appeals to adults, while the children are delighted with the miniature effects.

Alan Young is cast as Weedy, the village piper who befriends Tom, June Thornburn is cast as the lovely Queen of the Forest. Human actors share honors with Pal's puppetoons, 50 of them including Con-Fu-Shon (whose picture was in last month's JOURNAL) Jack-the-Jumper, Gingerbread Jim, Clownie, the Yawning Man and Dancing Thumbella.

ART CARNEY MEETS THE WOLF

The outstanding TV production of the season, of interest to puppeteers, was undoubtedly "Art Carney Meets Peter and the Wolf".

Taking some liberties with the original, this musical presentation based on the themes of Sergei Prokofieff resulted in an enchanting hour for

both children and adults.

Bil Baird's marionettes were at their best, and one critic observed that "A less gifted man than Art Carney might have been disgracefully outplayed by the brilliant host of marionettes created for the production by Bil Baird and his staff."

Ogden Nash supplied the lyrics, Andy Russell the book, and Paul Weston supplied the music based on themes that were composed by Prokofiev. Bil Baird supplied the voice for the Wolf, George Irving helping out with the songs, with Cora and a cast of assistants manipulating and doing voices for the extensive cast.

Art Carney was a "natural" for the part, so much so that Bil remarked, "I'd like to pick him up and take him home with the marionettes", so perfectly did he fit into the situation.

The "Wolf" of course, was the star

of the marionettes, with a near sighted dog named Humphrey and a crafty "lawyer" weasel, whose ethics could be questioned, giving the Wolf well earned competition for honors. Whether they sang, danced, laughed or merely shouted, no comparable group of woodlawn creatures was ever before assembled.

The lyrics were imaginative, sparkling, blithe and brilliantly done... "Pardon the Warp in my Woof," "Be Glad There's a Hole in Your Head" and other equally charming ones fitted into the production as perfectly as did the original "Peter and the Wolf" score which was fitted into the middle portion of the play.

When more plays that have the adult appeal of this production are shown, we will have to quit bemoaning the fact that folks think "puppets are only for children."

LOS ANGELES GUILD (continued)

(continued from page 13)

and rod puppets, and ventriloquists, with human performers of magic and pantomime as special events. Our shows have been done indoors and out, by sun light, electric light, and candle light, and still the infinite variety continues. We cover two countries, we unite over seventy five people, not including the many children belonging to five organizations holding group Guild memberships.

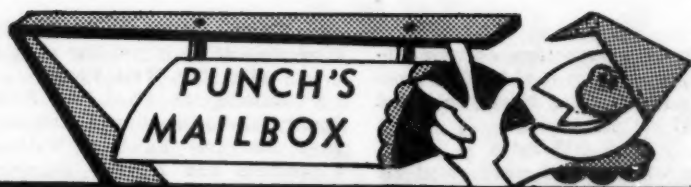
We have been privileged to have special events such as full evening performances by members Bob Baker and Jack Shafton. Last spring we had the opportunity to play host at a reception for the top Mexican puppeteer, Roberto Lago, who vacationed

with us, toured our two counties guided by several of our members, visited a workshop, and honored us with an illustrated lecture.

In June we met in Laguna Beach; in July we meet 60 miles away in Van Nuys, our two most distant points. But Southern California puppeteers think little of a many mile drive, if there is a Guild meeting with their co-workers, and more important their friends, at the end of it. The Guild is for fellowship and for the furtherance of the art of puppetry in the cultural life of Southern California.

Do you want to strengthen the P of A in your home town? Start a guild. It's fun!

Get a New Member Today



Rod Young, Box 313, Midtown Station, New York 18, New York

An icy, winter wind whistled round the gay little booth as through the curtains poked one over large, rather red nose. Chief proprietor of small puppet booth, owner of crooked nose, fiendish friend of merriment, Mr. Punch appeared with a shiver, shook aside an icicle, poked inside the large mailbox only to disappear, arms full of intrigue. Intriguing news he found. Exciting news therein. Interesting news discovered. With a happy new year wish tucked in, here it is for you!

Canadian Capers

The Toronto Guild of Puppetry which has recently moved to larger and better equipped premises, has opened courses to the general public. Working tools are supplied and puppet classes, practical and theoretical, are offered. Guild headquarters are at Tambllyn Lane, St. Clair Avenue East, at Yonge Street. Nancy Hazell is President. For information regarding membership, activities, courses, meetings and the show referral service write Mrs. A. Stimson, 35 Clissold Road, Toronto 18.

In an atmosphere of candlelight and conviviality, the Guild has introduced "Sessions in the Cellar" providing a completely unique entertainment once each month to which members are invited to bring guests. Headquarters houses a permanent puppet theatre seating nearly 150 people and has two stages. There is also a large workshop at the rear of the stage.

George Merten will have an article in **PLAYERS MAGAZINE** this spring.

Dorothy Hayward will visit with the Mertens after her February jaunt eastwards for shows at the Detroit Institute of Arts. Dorothy will be George's Assistant on the Festival Committee.

Erich and Gertrude Melchior were hosted royally by Toronto puppeteers when Gertrude played at the Toronto Casino Theatre, in November.

Chicago Cheers

Mary Chase and her puppets played at the opening of Chicago's annual Miracle of Books Fair, sponsored by the Children's Book Council, the Science Museum and the Chicago TRIBUNE during November. Hans Josef Schmidt presented his puppets in "Jack and the Beanstalk" and the climax of special events was George Latshaw presenting his happy characters, "Wilbur and the Giant." Pictured in the press with George were the villainous Giant and heroic little Wilbur.

John and Bonnie Shirley now make Chicago their home and are booked in solid with shows. Chicagoan Robin Nelson's Christmas greeting comes from Houston, Texas, indicating that his miniature ice revue enjoyed a club date down that-a-way. Princeton graduate Bill Webber, Flossmor, back from several years of world wide navy duty, showed slides to puppet interested friends at a fall get-together at the Ernest Hills. December found Bill doing three shows a day at Sears Roebuck; January he was off to Arizona for study at the School of Export and Import

Trade.

Windy City puppeteers enjoyed seeing slides by Romain and Ellen Proctor on a recent visit. Have you joined UNIMA? Write Prock!

Detroit Diggins

Those who received word about the valuable puppet reported missing from the collection at the Detroit Institute will be happy to know that it was found and returned to its rightful place.

Enrollment is high for puppet workshops at the Institute and the Detroit Guild is going strong. Jack Borin is President. Enie Marcaccio does a beautiful job as Editor of their NEWSLETTER. Performing at recent monthly meeting were, October, Ann Bate's former pupils, Patricia Kimbrough, Carol Benedict, Pat Riley and Michael Aseworth giving a delightful show "Eloise" and shadow show, "McElligot's Pool." November brought Mildred Berry presenting, "Lion and the Mouse," plus "The Elves and the Shoemaker." December's meeting featured the premier of a new show by Vernone Tracy and the Fosters plus an informative talk by Francis Robinson on the Paul McPharlin Puppet Collection.

Hope Gordon Westphal drives to Western in August in his new car bought as a result of seven shows a day at a Toy Fair this fall. Roy Etherington and assistant will tour Montana this spring with "Beauty and the Beast." Michael Sullivan, who has often toured for the Merideth Marionettes, was married December 27 in Detroit to Lilly Termini.

December 6 the Institute presented a new play by Nora MacAlvay "The Boy Titian," produced and directed by Gil Oden. Costumes based on paintings in the museum collection, set design from engravings, furniture and props authentic Renaissance pieces from the museum collection. A Texas spent Christmas provided a respite for Gil who brings some of

that Texas "bigness" to Detroit, a good place to be if you like puppetry!

On The West Coast

Performing at the Los Angeles County Guild meeting December 14 were Margaret Fickling, Walsworth Puppeteers and Zweer's Puppeteers. Burnett, is leading workshop members toward great things. January meeting was held at Helen Crail's home and featured films and slides. The February meeting is always Guild Youth Day. NEWSLETTER publisher Don Coleman is to be commended for a fine job in cooperation with editor John Zweers.

Alan Cook dusted off the Cookie Box Theatre for three performances of "Christmas Mouse" recently. Currently doing display work, Alan now hopes the puppets won't stay out of sight so much since they have part of a coach house to spread out in!

If everyone was as enthusiastic as Marie Hitchcock and Genevieve Engman who produce shows regularly in the Puppet Theatre at Balboa Park, San Diego, California, what a bright world the world would be. We can't begin to list all the clippings they send, pictures and feature stories in local papers, shows they produce and stage, but we appreciate it and want you to know about them. Besides shows at the permanent puppet theatre they do library shows, TV demonstrations, hold classes for youngsters, and are a constant delight to puppet enthusiasts.

The Bay Area Puppeteers gathered for their Christmas party at Ray and Betty Mount's home. New puppeteer recently arrived in San Francisco from New Orleans is Sidney Kittinger.

Children's Fairyland, Oakland, enjoyed a happy Christmas season with Puppet Theatre director Dorothy Hayward busy with daily shows there plus "extras" nearly every night during December.

Region One of the Children's Thea-

tre Conference held a meeting at San Francisco State College, November 9. Attending shows, panels and discussions were Betty and Ray Mount, Bob Darling, Sally Hansen and Lettie Connell. Next meeting, February, held in Sacramento.

Wolo has opened his new "Happy Things" studio-shop at 1454 Grant Avenue, San Francisco. The shop, featuring a swing for grown-ups, has many wonderful Wolo-designed and Wolo-decorated toys and things for sale. Interesting note is that before the famous earthquake and fire of '06 the property housed an Italian puppet theatre!

Never Content-to-do One-Thing-at a-Time Type, Lettie Connell produced three shows a day for the White House Department Store during the holiday season in San Francisco. Assisting were Lewis Mahlmann and Sally Hansen. Bob Darling did sets for this production of "Hippity Hop." Visitors backstage were Sandy Root, Lewis Parsons and his mother, Wolo and Lydia, Robert Mack, Pat Lavin, Tony Urbano and Dorothy Hayward.

Inga Strehlow did a number of shows early fall for the California Library Association, using a Bob Mason designed stage. October found her doing the same at Oakland's "Do It Yourself" show.

Wonderful Town

Lea Wallace recently gave an hour-long lecture on the history of puppetry to the student body and faculty of the Dramatic Workshop, New York City. Lea says, "It was gratifying to see how intrigued these drama students and instructors were, not only by seeing the different types of puppets and their own particular method of manipulation, but by the whole aspect of the art of puppetry as a complete theatre unit." We feel sure this proved to be one of the schools most interesting "March of Drama" programs. The Wallace Sisters presented "Santa's Visit" plus "Cinder-

ella" at the Village Dance and Puppet Center, December 26 thru 31.

Nancy Cole was kept busy doing holiday shows pre-Christmas. One for the children of the U. N. delegates staged at Arnold Constable's was especially exciting.

At a December meeting of the Senior Members Group of the New York Society for Ethical Culture, puppets were provided by Jean Schick Grossman, Education Director of the Play Schools Association, for extensive "role playing" among these elderly actors. Puppetry, providing a common experience for group discussion, helped the participating members have courage to freely express their feelings, ideas and experiences.

Mrs. Grossman is the author of a pamphlet, "How to Use Hand Puppets in Group Discussion," available for 75 cents from the Play Schools Association, 41 West Fifty-seventh Street,

Al Wallace sent it to Martin Stevens and Steve sent it to us, a batch of brochures telling of Maria Posusta and her daughter, Beatrice Mila, who travel the night club circuit under the name of Maria's Musicial Marionettes. Variety gave an excellent review. They may do a good act despite their wretched brochures! Do get help on brochure design if you are not gifted in that direction.

Main Banking Room, Bank for Savings, 22nd Street and Fourth Avenue, displayed a marionette exhibit and a theatre set-up where the Otto Kunze Marionettes, Otto and Caroline, performed several shows daily during November. Play was "Hakeem the Wise One" by Otto Kunze and Bill LeCornec.

Shopping Around

Recently we stumbled upon the "Gilded Lily" which is an uptown, chic specialty shop at 780 Madison Avenue. Should you be interested in buying a set of authentic Punch figures or separate European hand puppets (not commercially made

ones) write Mrs. Morse at that address. She collected them abroad for love but is willing to part with them for money and had several in a window display this fall.

Ever hear of now retired puppeteer Fannie Engle? Her entire collection of well made marionettes are for sale at Reed and Karen Antiques, 49 Greenwich Avenue, N.Y.C.

F.A.O. Shwartz Co. featured a mechanically operated lot of commercial Pelham puppets in their window pre-Christmas, among them a nearly life size Santa Claus marionette.

A Frank Paris marionette, "Baron Waste", has been shown in the window of "Design for Leisure" shop in the Village for several months.

For \$4.98 you may find Shirley Temple's Magnetic TV Theatre an interesting item. Small stage is replete with characters for three stories, actors moved from below by magnets.

Herewith, sources in New York where baubles, bangles, beads and fabrics provide ready materials for the puppet costume or wardrobe artist. I. Cigman Inc., 161 Orchard Street; Samuel Beckenstein Inc., 142 Orchard Street; Dazian's Theatrical Fabrics, 142 West 44 Street; Kate Shea's Remnants, 112 West 44 Street (opposite Belasco Theatre); Maharam Theatrical Fabrics, 130 West 46 Street.

The Steiff Toy Factory, originally a shut-in girl's hobby which eventually evolved into an industry in Giengen on the Brenz, Germany, boasts a complete line of stuffed toys in their new brochure available at most toy dealers. Brochure is actually a colorful picture dictionary of whimsical animals. Twenty two hand puppets are pictured plus three new model "Mimic Animals" to be manipulated so that head, mouth or paws animate together or separately.

Television

Look for a repeat showing of "Peter and the Wolf" on ABC-TV this spring, plus several other "spe-

cials" lined up by the Bairds.

Lettie Connell, in addition to her regular assistance on Ralph Chesse's "Brother Buzz" built a special marionette, "Happy Holly" and manipulated and voiced the elf during the Christmas season of video shows by a local San Francisco department store.

Wolo continues daily performances on the early morning Charles Dugdale Show on San Francisco's KPIX-TV. Burr Tillstrom, Kukla and Ollie helped Perry Como prepare for Christmas when they appeared again on his hour show December 20. Lea and Gia Wallace enjoyed seeing several of their students perform on the network "Play Your Hunch" quiz show this fall. Jerry Juhl started his own series, "Sylvie and Pup", seen on channel seven, San Jose, California.

Larry Smith, WCPO-TV, Cincinnati, besides "Willie Wonderful Time" and "Uncle Al" has picked up announcing chores signing on the station at 6:45 a. m. each day. His special puppet work for their Saturday network show Christmas week was especially imaginative. November found Larry with "Rudy the Rooster" and "Teaser the Mouse" doing personal appearances at a Cincinnati department store two evenings a week.

Chuck McCann is the puppeteer with Paul Ashley's puppets on the Peter Lind Hayes Show. Taking an "on camera" bow December 4, Chuck gave due credit to Ashley who worked on his first puppets years ago at the Steven's Mousetrap while they were in Chicago making puppet films for CORONET. Dorothy Kilgallen, November 18 reported that McCann would "waltz down the aisle with Susan O'Connor, a model, on December 27."

Late news: VARIETY, September 10, contained a half page story on the advent of "Howdy Doody's" eleventh

year on television.

Feel like you know Shari Lewis because she's so charming on television? You'll want a copy of **THE SHARI LEWIS PUPPET BOOK**. The popular young Mrs. Tarcher, rated a feature story in **CORONET**, in December, was a guest on Pat Boone's TV show *Christmas Day*, had her picture in **TV GUIDE**, November, in connection with an educational TV series sponsored by the Girl Scouts, was recently featured in **LOOK**, is given a write-up by Rod Young in February **PLAYERS MAGAZINE**. In her new book she teaches parents of tots 3-7 to make simple puppets and stage. Photos, drawings, sample scripts, provide great fun from a gal who's going places fast! **TIME MAGAZINE** fairly glowed in tribute in November and that's something!

SATURDAY REVIEW, December 6, wrote well of **THE PUPPET THEATRE** (Essential Books, \$5) by Miles Lee. "To those whose reaction to the puppet theatre is 'How clever of you not to get all those strings tangled,' Mr. Lee responds with detailed sections on manipulation and the producer's job. The possibilities of this dramatic form, he shows, are capable of immense development."

According to **TIME**, December 8, "Art Carney Meets Peter and the Wolf" (ABC) proved to be one of the most engaging shows ever to be seen on TV. Actor Carney was fine as a new character in the old fairy tale, but the wonder of the hour-long show was Bil and Cora Baird's 50 animal puppets who achieved something rare—a fairy tale mixed with true gaiety, a child's world edged by real irony."

TIME, two issues later, provided the Bairds with royal write-up when they wrote of the forthcoming "Carnival of the Animals" done on TV in January and of "Davey Jones" currently touring New England. The Bairds, said **TIME**, are proving puppets not only "cute" but "funny." Can

puppets not be more than that in the U.S.? Time will tell.

December's **ESQUIRE MAGAZINE** contained a sophisticated article poking fun at Punch, Santa Claus and the commercial TV industry. Illustrations were, oddly enough, several distinguished and hitherto unpublished water color and pen and ink sketches by George Cruikshank, preliminary works for etchings which illustrated John Payne Collier's **PUNCH AND JUDY**, published in London in 1828.

Quotes from articles and reviews in the **DAILY IOWAN** of a marionette production of "Medea" presented by Peter Arnott of England: "Arnott said that classical plays have rarely been presented through marionettes in the United States and were unique in England." And... "Medea was Arnott's first public performance in the United States, although his productions have been seen in Great Britain for the last ten years. Judging from the reaction Tuesday night, the public would be very disappointed if it were his last."

Q. V. P.

The Quaker Village Puppeteers celebrated their twenty first birthday! Birthday party, replete with vocal entertainment, pictures, slides, Festival reminiscence, was held at a restaurant in Philadelphia by this small but long-lived enthusiastic group. Best wishes!

Odds and The End

Oddly enough, Mr. Punch is overloaded with news this issue and several odds and ends must gather dust til next time. Even so, perhaps we have not heard from you. May we? "It's simple to write, so simple!" said Punch as he dipped Judy's nose into the inkwell and began by addressing an envelope to:

Rod Young
Box 313
Midtown Station
New York 18, N. Y.

Statement of Income and Expenses of

THE PUPPETEERS OF AMERICA

For Fiscal Year July 1, 1957 to June 30, 1958

July 1, 1957, Balance in Bank,
Previous Report 3,691.83

Receipts

Membership Dues	2,918.41
Festival Income	2,375.95
Festival Income (Deposit Returned)	500.00
Puppet Store Income and Sales	1,795.45
Puppetry Journal Adver- tising Income	83.15
Puppetry Journal Sales ..	60.50
Sale of Seals	43.00
Gifts, Donated during year	45.00

Operating Expenses

Advanced (12-1-56) For Operation of Journal Store....	100.00	
Less: Actual Cost	30.00	70.00
Total		7,891.45
		11,583.34

Less: Expenditures

Puppetry Store & Journal Expenses	3,601.47
Stenographic Services	190.00
Auditing and Tax Reports ..	37.50
Telephone	72.36
Office Supplies & Printing ..	248.84
Postage	77.17
Festival Advances	500.00
Festival Expenses	1,347.28
Premium on Fidelity Bond ..	22.50
Dues - A.E.T.A.	15.50
Dues - Foreign (UNIMA) ..	50.00
Cost Printing Directory ..	173.00
Gifts (Mel Helstein)	100.00
Refund made on Dues	8.50
Duplicating Machine Pur- chased	330.40
Duplicating Machine Sup- plies	8.75
Balance as per books	6,683.25
Bank Reconciliation:	
6-30-58 Balance as shown by Bank Statement	6,314.22
Plus: Deposits made on July 8, 1958	45.00
Received prior to June 30, 1958	289.75
Total	6,648.97
Less: Outstanding Checks Nos. 811 thru 824	1,651.88
Balance	4,997.09
Plus adjustment to Bank Account 7-32-57	3.00
Balance, as reflected by our Books	4,990.09

1958 FESTIVAL BALANCE SHEET

FESTIVAL

Receipts:

Registrations	2,239.00
Refunds	171.00
Shows	682.00
Tax	21.70
Programme Advertising	481.30
	190.00
	2,969.30

Expenses:

Printing	335.01
Insurance	47.76
Mailing	75.58
Phone, wires	68.95
Stationery, files, office supplies ..	39.98
Bank exchange charges (Canadian)	39.75
Exhibit & other display materials	64.33
Travelling expenses	339.96
Express	28.00
Talent	1,125.00
Lecture, shows, working facilities	216.00
Miscellaneous	87.30
	2,407.50
Total Receipts	2,969.30
Total Expenses	2,407.50
Festival Profits	561.80

WORKSHOP

Registrations	799.00
Refunds	82.00
	717.00

Expenses:

Printing (Manuals and cards)	218.50
Supplies	20.00
Demonstrators (subsistence)	140.00
	378.50
Total Receipts	717.00
Total Expenses	378.50
Workshop Profit	338.50

STORE

Receipts	1,018.37
Commissions, etc.	696.40
Profit	321.97
1958 Festival Advance	750.00
Current Advance	750.00

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EIGHT PLAYS FOR THE PUPPET THEATRE

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Most puppeteers in the English-speaking world are now familiar with George Merten's two books on the more technical aspects of puppetry—"The Marionette" and "The Hand Puppet." He and his wife, who is also an excellent puppeteer, have now written "Eight Plays for the Puppet Theatre", a book which should, in view of the shortage of good puppet plays, both add to the authors' reputation and prove very popular with all those who already know his other two books.

These eight plays are all original; they are of differing lengths, and all contain plenty of puppet action and plenty of humour of one kind or another; they have been written to appeal to audiences of varying age, and to be performed with both string and hand puppets. In the foreword, Dr. Bruce Attridge, who has worked with the Mertens on the C.B.C. television program for children, "Junior Magazine", writes of the skilled composition and of the gleeful spirit of these plays.

You will note the use of the word 'theatre' in the title; the word is used to remind puppeteers that their productions can be more than the mere juggling of animated dolls, and that the standards expected and enjoyed in the 'live' theatre are those which should also apply to puppet performances. Careful and detailed production notes are provided for each play.

There is no fee for productions of these plays by amateur and non-profit-making groups, and it is hoped thereby to encourage the use of these plays which in turn may broaden the scope and strengthen the repertoire of many puppeteers.

80 Pages — 8½ in x 11 in — Stiff Paper Cover — PRICE \$3.00

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PUPPET THEATER HANDBOOK	Marjorie Batchelder		\$3.75
PUPPETS AND PLAYS	Batchelder and Comer		\$4.00
THE HAND AND ROD PUPPET	Batchelder and Michael (paper)		\$1.50
FIRST BENCH BOOK OF PUPPETRY	Whanslaw		
SECOND BENCH BOOK OF PUPPETRY	Whanslaw (both)		\$3.50
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MARIONETTES IN MOTION	W. A. Dwiggins		\$1.50
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at \$3.50 each; 1939 \$5.00; 1940 \$5.00; 1941 \$4.50; 1944-45 \$2.50.			

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PUPPETS ARE FUN	Corpus Christi Junior League	.75
WORKSHOP MANUAL	1958 Manual from Chapel Hill Workshop	1.00

MISCELLANEOUS

Making and Staging Marionettes - Bil Baird - 40 pg. manual 40¢

Sevens—Rose Marionette Diagram ----- \$1.00
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Lost Boy - a puppet play by Nora Wood (for small children) \$1.

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